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Christian Community

A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the
Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.,
and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

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LABOR SUNDAY

One of the opportunities which the Protestant Church dare not overlook is to relate itself seriously and constructively to the organized labor movement. This is no once-a-year fad, but a year-round job, of course. But Labor Sunday is a good time to rekindle the concern, to ask what Christianity means for labor and what labor means for the church.

One aid toward this end is the annual LABOR SUNDAY MESSAGE, prepared by the Federal Council of Churches. Copies may be secured from the Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y., at a cost of 5 cents per copy, $1 for fifty, $1.60 per 100, or $5 for 500.

Other resources are suggested in these pages under the heading, SPEAKING OF BOOKS and RECOMMENDED PAMPHLETS. And you will not let a social action committee or men's club meeting go by without discussing the GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANIZED LABOR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS.

Labor Letter

These weekly newsletters on developments in religion and industrial relations are available upon request. They consist of personal comment by CSA's industrial relations secretary, Francis W. McPeek, and are published from September through June. No subscription list is maintained. Annual contributions are invited, however, from those who care to make them. Requests to be placed on the mailing list should be addressed to Mr. McPeek at 1164 E. 58th St., Chicago 38, Illinois.

PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

Suggestions for the Social Action Committee in the Local Church

By HUBER F. KLEMME

Of course, your fall planning has already begun. Last spring, before vacations and unpredictable summer activities scattered your members, the efficient pastor and the wise committee chairman got together and put a red circle around a date—late in August or the first week in September—when your social action comittee would meet.

Your planning began at the *last* meeting of the "activity year" when you went over the past year's program, reviewing the high spots and the low ones, appraising your mistakes and your successes, checking yourself against a standard (like the one suggested in the September-October 1949 issue of *Christian Community*.)

Perchance, your planning has advanced to the stage where you made certain tentative decisions, agreed on one or two projects you would undertake during the fall and winter ahead. Even so, you will want a full-dress meeting of your committee to outline the program for the year. If you have done none of these things, your committee had *better* get busy and catch up on its uncompleted "homework."

When You Meet

At any rate, when your committee comes together it will want to do the following:

1. Take a quick look at the congregation and at the community to see whether there are not unmet needs for social education and action near at hand.

2. Check over the suggested subjects of discussion and areas of concern outlined below.

3. Choose at least one interest centering in the local community and one related to the world beyond the parish. This will prevent your work from becoming either too abstract or too narrow.

4. Ask yourselves what resources the members of the committee will require to

The problems of the economic order call for the best efforts of Christians in management, labor, agriculture, government and the professions—like these Evangelical and Reformed delegates at the Detroit Conference on the Church and Economic Life.

keep abroast of both the general field and the specific interests in which you have agreed to "major."

5. Consider how you will go about achieving the objectives on which you have agreed. In the course of the year you should plan some meetings and programs that are primarily for the committee itself, some to which you will invite those members of the congregation whom you know to be directly interested, and some for the entire church family.

Suggestions for Action

Here are some of the problems with which church groups will be concerned during 1950 and 1951. Not every committee may be able to deal with all of them. But every church that is serious about its purpose can work on some of them.

Christian Citizenship. This is an election year. Your committee can work with other groups—the laymen's and women's groups, the League of Women Voters, the labor and business groups—to get out the vote. Some churches will arrange forums or informal conferences with candidates for office to consider their stand on important issues, local as well as national. The denominational legislative committees will have a *Voting Record* of the Congress ready by October to help your members see what their Congressmen have done.

Point Four, the proposal for technical and financial assistance to the economically underdeveloped areas of the world, is one of the most hopeful signs on the horizon of international statesmanship. Your people want to know about it. Hold a forum or a seminar. Get leadership from a nearby college or university, or write to the Reverend Herman F. Reissig, International Relations Secretary, The Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., for suggestions. See the October, 1949, issue of *Social Action* (15c), and the Federal Council of Churches' *Christian Principles for a Program of Technical Assistance* (2c, $1 per 100). Forward your conclusions to the Department of State and to your Congressmen.

Refugees and Expellees. You have already worked for the resettlement of Displaced Persons who were victims of Nazi or Communist aggression. There are other refugees, including some 12 million "expellees" of German ancestry, who have no home. Their problem, too, requires attention. The October issue of *Christian Community* will have material on this problem.

Alcohol Education. The use and misuse of alcoholic beverages is increasingly serious. Is there an approach that is both scientifically sound and truly Christian? What can we do about the problem? The April 1950 issue of *Social Action* and the December 1950 issue of *Christian Community* will deal with the problem of the drinker, and with a projected denominational program, respectively.

Economic Life. The statement on labor-management relations in this issue of *Christian Community* is a good start for an evening discussion, especially if you add for good measure the other publications recommended. There's more on this subject coming in the September issue of *Social Action.* For a broader approach to the questions of freedom, control, and economic motivation, see the report of the Detroit Conference on the Church and Economic Life (20c) and the March 1950 issue of *Social Action.* A good way to proceed is to have a panel consisting of a business man, a labor representative, an attorney or an economist, and a skilled moderator. Why not plan now for a community-wide observance, or a local Church and Economic Life Conference during Church and Economic Life Week in January?

Civil Rights. The January 1951 issue of *Christian Community* will feature a review of the status of civil rights legislation. Watch Legislative Action Service (address below) for information on this and the related area of civil liberties. (See March 1950 issue of *Christian Community* also.)

Housing. If you study your community, one of the unmet needs you are likely to discover is housing. The November 1949 issue of *Social Action* gives a report of what church people in one community are doing about it, as well as an analysis of various proposals for legislative action. A free copy of *The Local Community Job Under The Housing Act of 1949* may be secured from the Director of Group Services, Office of the Administrator, Housing and Home Finance Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

Health. Denunciations of compulsory health insurance do not meet the need for medical care. A discussion of the proposals of the American Medical Association, the Federal Security Administration, and other alternative proposals is to be recomended. The Public Affairs pamphlet, *How Shall We Pay for Health Care?* (available from the Commission on Christian Social Action, 20c) is helpful at this point.

These are by no means the only problems that will concern us. The question of federal aid to education, various aspects of the relationship of church and state, race relations and international tensions will continue to call for our best thought and effort. Many church groups will find stimulating the inquiry on *The Responsible Society* and *Christian Action in Society,* initiated by the Study Commission of the World Council of Churches (297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.). And new needs may emerge at any moment. A good committee will plan for the un-planned for, too!

These Will Help

We assume you know all about the tools at your disposal—the handbooks and newsletters published by the social action agencies. Early this fall we shall have a new *Social Action Guidebook,* written by Ray Gibbons, director of the Council for Social Action. This will have six study and discussion outlines of the *why* and *what* and *wherefore* of social action as well as information about the social action program—local, regional, and denominational. It may be ordered from either the Council for Social Action or the Commission on Christian Social Action, for 15c per copy.

Other printed resources are *World Government and the United Nations* (CSA—10c) by Herman F. Reissig, *Christian Action in Race Relations* (CCSA—15c) by John W. Flucke, and *The Social Action Committee in the Local Congregation* (CCSA—10c) by Huber F. Klemme. If you are interested in visual aids, secure the latest catalogue from the Missions Council, Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, *or* the Bureau of Audio-Visual Aids, Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa.

The members of your committee should be familiar with one or another of the departmental newsletters, free on request from the editors—*Legislative Action Service,* Thomas B. Keehn, 1751 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C.; *Christian Agriculture,* Shirley Greene, Merom, Indiana; and *Labor Letter,* Francis W. McPeek, 1164 E. 58th St., Chicago 37, Illinois. You might also wish to subscribe to such periodicals as *Information Service* (297 Fourth Ave.,

New York 10), *Christianity and Crisis* (537 West 121st St., New York 27), and — indispensable! — *Social Action* (289 Fourth Ave., New York 10).

Many of the above suggestions are suitable for your Woman's Guild, Laymen's Fellowship, or youth group. Women's groups may also find useful a five-cent reprint from *Thy Will to Do,* entitled "In Our Community"—a dramatic presentation of CSA through the eyes of the staff members' wives—and a four-page leaflet with reading list, entitled, "Now Then We are Ambassadors for Christ: A Call to Action for Women's Social Action Committee." These may be secured from the National Fellowship of Congregational Christian Women, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10. Other useful material may be secured from the Christian Citizenship Department of the Women's Guild of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Social action materials for youth groups should be secured from Pilgrim Fellowship (CC), 19 South LaSalle St., Chicago 3, Illinois, or Youth Department (E&R), 1505 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa.

In Conclusion

Remember, if you can't get a committee on social action appointed, you may still be able to organize a small voluntary discussion and action group. Shirley Greene has prepared a handbook for such groups, entitled *Christian Democracy in Action,* which may be ordered at ten cents each from the Council for Social Action. The Ohio Farm Bureau has 1500 such groups, called Advisory Councils, in one state alone. A number have been organized by the Reverend Mr. Greene, especially in rural churches. They are particularly effective in exploring local community problems.

The Reverend Huber F. Klemme is the executive secretary of the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and editor of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Requests for regular mailings or additional copies for Congregational Christians should be addressed to Ray Gibbons, Director, Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Speaking of Books

1. LABOR ECONOMICS AND LABOR RELATIONS, by Lloyd G. Reynolds, Prentice-Hall, 1949. An excellent discussion of the institutional structures of unions and managements in America and of the techniques through which they are related. "The book," says the author, "is oriented forward toward analysis of the highly unionized economy which is in the process of development in the United States." His treatment of collective bargaining is sharp and accurate. A special feature is the presentation of wage theory. There are few readers who will not benefit by a thorough study of this work.

2. DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE, by John A. Ryan, D.D., MacMillan, 1942. Though eight years old, the 3rd and last edition of this famous work by the late Monsignor Ryan is a popular exposition of Roman Catholic social principles. The book discusses the morality of private land ownership and rent, the morality of private capital and interest, and the moral aspects of profits and wages. It is recommended to many of those who have asked where they can read an authoritative account of the basic Roman Catholic position.

3. JOHN L. LEWIS, AN UNAUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY, by Saul Alinsky, Putnam, 1949. Alinsky has written a tremendously controversial account of America's most controversial labor leader. Contained in it are many of the notes Alinsky made at the time Lewis broke with Roosevelt for good. It portrays the stormy rise of Lewis in the labor field, and offers explanations of his repeated and bitter breaks with other labor leaders. A good summertime book.

4. LEFT, RIGHT, AND CENTER, by Sidney Lens, Henry Regnery Co., 1949. While unevenly written, Lens has described "conflicting forces in American labor" from the standpoint of one long in the movement. His criticisms of simple and "business unionism," racketeers, "sweethearts and bureaucrats," have to be understood from his own basic conviction about the need for a labor party. One valuable feature is the tracing of the Stalinist line through the past 20 years.

5. ECONOMICS FOR CONSUMERS, by Leland J. Gordon, American Book Company, 1944. "The distinctive feature of *Economics for Consumers* is that it works through established economic principles, always from the consumer point of view. The dominant fact is the prevalence of waste in current consuming practices. The central theme is consumer welfare." Though data are old, this book stands as one of the few approaches to economic questions from the viewpoint of users and purchasers. Though intended for college study, it reads swiftly and well to an arm chair browser.

F. W. McP.

Recommended Pamphlets

*May be ordered from Commission on Christian Social Action.
†May be ordered from Council for Social Action.
‡May be ordered from Federal Council.

Human Relations in Modern Business, "A Guide for Action Sponsored by American Business Leaders." A 52-page pamphlet prepared chiefly under leadership of Robert W. Johnson in consultation with numerous business and religious authorities. Stressing the moral responsibilities of management, the booklet discusses in-plant relationships that are desirable as well as wage problems. Great emphasis is laid upon the dignity of the worker. That it is having broadest distribution is shown by the fact that in April it was already in third printing, having been originally published last November. Highly recommended. Published by Prentice-Hall.

The Responsibility of Christians in an Interdependent World is the pamphlet containing the recent Detroit Conference statement and reports. Gives the texts of the four principal topics discussed, lists delegates and observers, and describes how the conference was convened. 20c the copy. The year's most important Protestant statements on church and economic life. *‡

National Leaders Speak on Economic Issues is another pamphlet growing out of the Detroit Conference. This one contains the principal addresses of the first day's sessions, given by George M. Harrison (President of the Brotherhood of Railway Workers), Herschel D. Newsom (Chairman of the Indiana State Grange), Walter P. Reuther (President of the UAW-CIO), and Noel Sargent (Secretary, National Association of Manufacturers). Price is 10c. The conference sermon, "We Are Here To Make All Hell Tremble," by Dr. Harold A. Bosley, is also available at the same price. *‡

The Truth About the Federal Council of Churches (free) is a rebuttal of charges made against the Council by John T. Flynn and others. ‡

Freedom of Enterprise and Social Control, is the March issue of SOCIAL ACTION written by its economist-editor, the Rev. Kenneth Underwood, and used as background for the Detroit discussions on "Organized Groups: Freedom of Enterprise and Social Controls." A significant contribution to Christian economic thought. 15c. *†

Industrial Realism and Christian Idealism will be the September issue of SOCIAL ACTION, written by the Rev. Francis W. McPeek, industrial relations secretary of the Council for Social Action. *†

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANIZED LABOR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

In the area of industrial relations, as in any other important area of common life, the Church has a duty to discover and teach the principles which lead to the practice of human justice, and to the development of peaceful adjustments of difference.

We recognize that within the past twenty years enoromus modifications have taken place in our economic life. Among them is the rapid growth of trade unionism. One-quarter of our nation's work force are now members of labor organizations which help to establish wages, hours, and conditions of work for their members by collective bargaining. At the same time there has been increasing managerial control in the conduct of much of our business life, as contrasted with ownership control, and this is paralleled by greater and greater concentration of business capital.

We believe that responsible and democratic trade unionism is both necessary and wholesome. The individual worker in an industrial establishment con seldom express effectively his needs and desires respecting his employment. By joining in a democratic organization with fellow-workers, he can present in an orderly way the demands which he feels must be made if his dignity as a worker is to be upheld. Management, for its part, is assured of a channel of communication, and is able to recognize and to make adjustment for needs of its employees.

A little understood fact about labor organizations is that they tend to resist totalitarian encroachments not only in places of work, but in the community as well. As such, they are valuable and powerful supports to political as well as industrial democracy.

But their very existence creates new rights and new duties for both workers and management. New methods are called into play. These must be assessed from the moral standpoint, as well as from the standpoint of practical business operations.

Goals of Good Industrial Relations

We believe there are a number of goals to be achieved in the field of industrial relations, among which we list the following:

1. **A Substantial Degree of Industrial Peace.** One of the basic principles of organized labor in the United States has been reliance upon collective bargaining to improve working conditions and to determine wages. This is important not only to management and labor, but to the community as well. All three must work together to find means of improving collective bargaining, to find methods by which it may be increasingly based upon knowledge and facts, and not on economic strength. Collective bargaining should be relied upon not only to produce the labor contract, but to give the contract continuing interpretation. Through collective bargaining, union and management learn to resolve their differences peacefully and without either work stoppages or threat of strike or lock-out.

Industrial peace is a relative term. Sharp differences of opinion are sometimes unavoidable. In a free society, the industrial strike is an undesirable but oftentimes justifiable expression of conviction. Industrial peace is clearly meaningless in a totalitarian country, where both labor and management are compelled to follow the dictates of their political leaders in all phases of economic and political life.

2. **Mutual Trust.** Dealings between labor and management officials should be direct and aboveboard. There should be willingness on both sides to present and consider full facts with reference to any issue in question. Both labor and management should confidently rely upon each other to carry out their pledges after agreements have been reached, as they are morally and legally obligated to do.

3. **Mutual Sense of Equity.** There should be the conviction that agreements are fairly made, and both parties should cooperate to the end of strengthening the business institution, not only for their mutual benefit, but for the benefit of society as a whole.

4. **Mutual Recognition of Basic Rights.** Moral and civil law give to owners, managers, workers and consumers certain basic rights. These rights should be fully recognized and accepted by all concerned. The union should accept private ownership and recognize the right of management to operate its business and to produce for the consuming public with a reasonable profit. Management, on its part, should realize that union security is a prerequisite to constructive labor-management relations.

5. **Recognition of the Dignity of Workers.** Both management and union should enhance the security and the dignity of the workers, regardless of race, creed or color; maintain for all the widest opportunities of self expression and self government; afford them recognition for the performance of their tasks and services; and make it possible for them to take a constructive part in the life of the community.

We make special note of the fact that a union does not perform its fullest function merely by advancing the real wages of its members, or by securing to them additional benefits. A test of democratic labor unionism is the degree to which the union assists its members to develop spiritually, intellectually and emotionally and improves their living conditions, as well as their working conditions.

Nor do we believe that management discharges its obligation merely by maintaining employment and returning a profit. A test of democratic management is the degree to which it succeeds in working out mature, constructive relationships with the union which will make the union a partner in the enterprise and advance the general welfare.

6. **Prompt Settlement of Grievances.** Among the most valuable instruments of modern industrial relations is the grievance procedure, established through collective bargaining, whereby a union or a worker with a complaint can secure adjustment. We believe that in plants where good industrial relations obtain, grievances will be handled promptly, systematically, and equitably.

7. **Utilization of Voluntary Arbitration.** Arbitration, when voluntarily accepted by both parties, is an expression of mutual confidence, and a reasonable method of resolving disputes when bargaining, mediation, conciliation and other methods have failed.

8. **Cooperation for General Welfare.** A criterion of good industrial relations is not only seen in agreement between parties immediately involved, but in the effect of their accord on the community. Their moral obligation is to render service to the entire community in terms that promote the general welfare. It is also the moral obligation of both to provide work for all and to assist every worker in the development of his skills to the full, including development as a citizen.

The above statement, prepared by the Industrial Relations Committee, was adopted by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches in February, 1950. Inquiries may be addressed to Rev. Francis W. McPeek, 1164 East 58th St., Chicago 37, Illinois.